

JOB COMPLETION REPORT
INVESTIGATIONS PROJECTS

State of Montana

Project No. F-10-R-1 Work Plan No. I Job No. I-A

Title of Job: Appraisal of State Lands

Objectives:

To appraise the state lands both under lease and not under lease, for their value as public access to the fishing waters of the state and to present these appraisals to the State Board of Land Commissioners for such action by them as is appropriate to insure preservation of public access.

Techniques Used:

Each tract of state land on or near water in the Upper Beaverhead River Drainage was visited and appraisals were made as follows:

- a. Present land use.
- b. The present and potential value in general terms of the body of water for fishing and recreation.
- c. Value of the land as public access to the water.
- d. Present status of access to the water over each state land tract.
- e. Possible conflict of present land use with that proposed for public access.

Appraisal reports and recommendations were written and presented to the State Board of Land Commissioners. Close contact was maintained by the project leader with the State Board of Land Commissioners that their action on the appraisals and recommendations may be followed. Several tracts of state land were examined in scattered areas at the request of the State Land Board for information on these tracts.

Findings:

The state land survey this year was started in Beaverhead County on the upper drainage of the Beaverhead River. This survey proceeded as far down the Beaverhead as Lima with the Blacktail and Grasshopper Drainages of the Beaverhead included. State land in 70 sections was examined in the area. In addition 14 state land tracts were examined by request of the State Land Board and others as land for which requests for sale had been received. Only one of this group was not recommended as valuable for fishing and recreation. Fifty-seven tracts (68%) were recommended for retention and 27 (32%) of little value for fishing or recreation, were not so recommended.

Irrigation and water shortage were the main reasons for poor classification with dewatering or stagnation and heavy silt loads being secondary reasons for rejection.

Analysis and Recommendations:

The state land survey provides information to the State Land Board on values of state land tracts to fishing and recreation. The Commissioner of State Lands notes on file card for each land tract of fishery value, that the Fish and Game Department recommends retaining this land in state ownership. This per agreement with the Land Board withholds this land from sale.

The job was found to be greater than was at first anticipated. Part-time help demonstrated that two men working together can greatly increase the speed of making the surveys. It is therefore recommended that a two man crew carry on the work for the coming year.

Summary:

State land survey was conducted on 84 tracts, 74 of which were in Beaverhead County. Of these tracts 68% were recommended for withholding from sale. Irrigation and shortage of water were the main reasons for not recommending the remaining 32% for withholding.

Data and Reports:

The original field records and reports are filed in the Helena office.

Prepared by Clinton G. Bishop Approved by _____

Date April 30, 1953